

March 11, 2021

Senate Transportation Committee

HB 1279

Sen. David Clemens, Chair

For the record, I am Stephanie Dassinger. I am appearing on behalf of the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota. I am also the deputy director and attorney for the North Dakota League of Cities.

The Chiefs of Police appear today in opposition to HB 1279 as it is currently written because the bill removes language that was enacted last session to help address the Chiefs' concerns with relation to traffic fines. The Chiefs' primary concern is the safety of individuals using the roadways and making sure the fines associated with violating the traffic laws are high enough to provide a deterrent to the public from breaking traffic laws.

HB 1279, as originally introduced, sought to create uniform traffic fines across all speed zones by making the fines for speeding calculated by multiplying the amount of mph over the speed limit by five dollars. This is a substantial increase to existing speeding fines. For example, under existing law, the penalty for going 10 mph over the speed limit is \$10. Under the original version of HB 1279, the penalty for going 10 mph over the speed limit would be \$50. The original version of HB 1279 would provide a deterrent to individuals speeding. If the language in HB 1279 to provide this fee structure is restored, the Chiefs agree that it would be reasonable to amend North Dakota Century Code Section 40-05-06 to not allow a city to double the fines for speeding violations.

Alternatively, if this committee seeks to retain the fines that are in existing law for speeding violations under 65 mph, the Chiefs request that sections 2 and 3 of the bill be removed. The authority to double those speeding fines needs to be left in the hands of the locals to try to set fines that provide a deterrent and promote public safety.

The Chiefs of Police respectfully request that this Committee adopt amendments to HB 1279 to address the Chiefs' concerns regarding the authority to double traffic fines. Alternatively, if this Committee decides not to amend the bill, the Chiefs of Police respectfully request a do not pass recommendation on HB 1279.

Thank you for your consideration.